

A New York Judge has refused to decide between two songs in rag time. This is a sort of task that might have made Solomon himself take fright at the height of his judicial career.

In the fact that judgement has just been given in an English Chancery case involving the property of a testator who died in 1838, admirers of Dickens will find a curious corroborative detail.

There are more daily newspapers in Costa Rica than in any other Central American republic. The natives of the other Central American countries rely almost exclusively on weekly and monthly publications.

Investigation by the state veterinarian showed that the high death rate among horses in Maryland is due to cerebro-spinal meningitis. The disease is the result of poor food, bad drainage and generally unsanitary environment.

The Philadelphia Times notes as one of the "queer things" that law officers are at work in that city looking for children to go to school under the Compulsory Education act, when there is not room enough for the children who try to get into the schools of their own volition.

Knowledge and the higher education are worth acquiring for their own sake. If every college graduate in the land for a hundred years died without accumulating property, or even died poor in this world's goods it would not constitute an argument against college education. As a matter of fact, however, any training that disciplines, broadens and enriches the mind, as university or college training does, must supply a better equipment for grappling readily and successfully with the problem of existence, whether in the learned professions or in department of commercial endeavor. It is not the primary function of a college to show a man how to make money, remarks the Chicago Record-Herald.

In the history of medicine a great deal of space must be given to the disappointments of the most sanguine hopes. At frequent intervals a positive cure for some incurable malady is announced, and for a time the excited hopes and confident expectations produce a happy effect on patients. In a great majority of cases, however, the benefits soon disappear, and the cure is consigned to the limbo of the useless. In the light of experience it would be foolish to base large hopes on the power of the shrub "tua-tua" to cure leprosy. Experiments with its effects have been few, and, although favorable, they warrant only the conclusion that the shrub should be given a more extended trial among the lepers at Tahiti and elsewhere, states the Philadelphia Record.

The New York Commercial Advertiser remarks that it seems as if enterprising Australia were to be the first country of size which will grant women equal rights with men in property and franchise. Premier Barton of the Commonwealth government recently distributed prizes at the Methodist ladies' college in Melbourne, and in the course of his speech said that one of his colleagues had prepared a bill which would be presented at the present session of parliament which would put women on the same footing as men, and that, moreover, the bill would have the support of the government. In New Zealand and South Australia women already enjoy the franchise, and it has worked so well, said Mr. Barton, that its extension to the whole of Australia is regarded as one of the most important measures that is to be carried through this year.

A writer in the Forum says that punishment for crime has much to do with making criminals. This statement seems paradoxical, but it is an indisputable fact. Hundreds may be saved from a life of crime by the proper administration of the criminal laws. It used to be thought that severity of punishment was the wise course, indeed the only method to prevent crime. Fear, no doubt, deters many; but it is not fear that must be chiefly relied upon to save men from crime. Crime existed when men were drawn and quartered, and when death was the penalty not only for murder but for many minor offences. It existed when the death penalty was inflicted in public places, and when the plucking out of an eye, the cutting off of the hand, and various other kinds of torture were common punishments. No man was ever made better by being put in the stocks. Severity is useful only in cases in which reformation is hopeless, and in which absolute removal from all social intercourse is therefore necessary.

Portugal is the most illiterate country in Europe; 67 percent of its population cannot write. In Italy the proportion of illiterates is 53 percent, in Russia 36, in Spain 9, in Britain 3 1-2.

Two of the late T. S. Cooper's paintings have just been sold in London for \$1,500 each. As he lived ninety-nine years and painted for over seventy years, this is not a case where price is made high by scarcity of product.

The Mobile (Ala.) Register advises the legislature of Mississippi to accept Mrs. Davis's offer and buy Beauvoir, Jefferson Davis's late home. The house and grounds have, it is said, been neglected and illkept, only a custodian residing upon the premises and gathering what fees he can from chance visitors.

A German professor has announced that "the higher education" has had a bad effect upon German women. He asserts that girls deteriorate in womanly qualities, when they devote themselves wholly to study, and advises that all should be trained to domestic duties before being allowed to go to college.

The present population of Siberia is about 8,000,000. Assuming that its resources are equal to those of Russia in Europe, Siberia is capable of sustaining a population of 80,000,000. It is believed that Siberia could produce 10,000,000 tons of wheat annually, 5,000,000 tons of which could be available for exportation.

The suffrage laws of Italy are very liberal, and being based upon educational qualifications, have proved an incentive to learning. All men above the age of twenty-one, who can read and write, all who pay \$4 a year in taxes or \$30 a year for rent for habitation or \$100 a year for rent for farms, or any one of these can vote, and anybody can go to parliament who is thirty years old except priests and officials of the government.

Some woman has calculated that 20,000,000 mince pies placed on top of one another will make a monument of indigestion 315 miles high. What an absurd thing to do with pie! If the monument were built it would not be three minutes before the base would be undermined by boys who would bring the fabric crushing to the earth, thus distributing stomach aches and plenty to 315 miles of the pie belt. Glorious dream! Useless calculation!

A Prohibition journal claims that fully 30,000,000 of the inhabitants of the United States, or more than one-third of the entire population, are now living under prohibition, either by State law or local option. Forty-one states of the forty-five are included in the numeration, either in whole or in part. Even Kentucky, in spite of its undesired notoriety, has 90 out of its 119 counties under prohibition's sway. The four excepted states are Idaho, Nebraska, Utah and Wyoming.

Complete reports of the customs for last year indicate that there was an extraordinary importation of diamonds and precious stones at the port of New York. The importations for 1901 of diamonds and other precious stones, all uncut, amounted to \$6,702,956.05 in value. The year's importations of the same kinds of stone, but cut, were valued at \$18,160,511.02. Thus the total value of the cut and uncut stones was \$24,862,567.07. Many other diamonds and stones came by express packages, so that it is estimated that the total recorded imports amounted to \$27,000,000, not counting those which were smuggled. This seems to be pretty good evidence that the American people had considerable money to spend in luxuries last year.

German influence in Asia Minor, which has grown greater from year to year, will become predominant when the railway to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf shall have been built under the concession just granted by the sultan to a German company. Sooner or later the rotten fabric of Ottoman power must crumble, and when the time shall come for a division of the Turkish spoil a steel roadway from Berlin to the utmost frontiers of the sultan's empire will be of incalculable advantage to its German possessors. Meanwhile the German commercial conquest of Turkey in Europe and Asia goes on apace, and the German consul and merchant may at no distant time be followed by the German artisan and husbandman. It is eastward that the star of German empire takes its way, and the repopulation and resurrection from its ashes of the one-time garden spot of the world and cradle of civilization would be a task worthy the ambition of a great nation, reflects the Philadelphia Record.

## SEÑOR VALENTINO.

Twelve o'clock midnight. From far across the country comes a dull, hollow, reverberating boom—the signal gun of the Spanish forces. Slowly, almost painfully, the Cuban patriot flung back his light blanket, gazed upward for a moment at the burning mass of stars in the heavens, then fell back again to dream of bloody charges made by the gray dragoons of Spain, and of their repulse by the sturdy Cuban macheteers.

"Surely not again, Señor Captain? One must be cool to think so lightly of a task like ours."  
"Vive Cuba Libre! You are right, Pedro—we must be up and away."  
This time the young Cuban sprang to his feet and shook himself as though that was a punishment for his momentary forgetfulness. As the two young men stand side by side in the soft mellow light of the moon it is easy to see that they are not of the lower caste or guajiros, a party that comprises a large division of the patriot army, but of the Cuban planter, a gentleman of the highest degree.

Both are armed with small arms alone, though their appearance indicates that they have seen military service.

"Now is the time to read our general's instructions, Pedro; the señor lays great stress upon our actions to-night, and knows that at this very hour we are moving toward the forces of the enemy to accomplish a purpose. The penalty of which, if we are caught, is instant death."

As the speaker ceased he drew a sealed package from beneath the folds of his sash.

"Inferno!" he continued a moment later; "the general is terse and sends us out to do much against great odds. The spy, he says, is a guarded prisoner in the Spanish camp, but his whereabouts he knows not; and yet we are to liberate him at the risks of our own lives, and when we have accomplished this receive any reward we may ask for."

"Carramba! Valentino, the terms are good. Two or three hundred dollars will satisfy me; let us hasten."  
"In sooth you speak right, the job is a profitable one, but the night is ill omened. What care we for gold when the liberty of Cuba is at stake?"

"Do you forget, señor, that Spanish metal will purchase the American steel with which the Cuban patriots will win their freedom?"

"No, Pedro; but does not the general turn over all of his spare gold to the filibustering expeditions?"  
"Ah, one forgets in his eagerness to aid his country. Greater though will be the fever scourge, Valentino, than all the steel and forces of Cuba. Gloria! Who can defeat us when God is on our side?"

"But this spy, Pedro—why should our leader take more than common-place interest in him, when first he broached the subject to me he wept like a child, and implored me in the name of Heaven to save him. Pedro, there is a mystery here."  
"I doubt it not, señor; and did he not mention a name?"

"Ah, not once; nor did I question him, he was so wrought with grief."

"See! The lights of the Spanish camp, Valentino; we will halt here; the moon is disappearing, the stars are falling, and it will soon be dark."

"A fortune for a hundred brave macheteers now! Yon camp would not look so quiet and peaceful, Pedro, were my wish gratified."

"There, at last Palo hill has hidden the tell-tale orb! Take one more look Valentino, before we leave on our desperate game of chance."

The two men gazed for a moment eastward toward the insurgent country, and then to the westward at the twinkling lights a mile or so off on the plains.

"Will they be there—the horses?" whispered the one who had likened their task to a game of chance.

"He is a true Cuban, and will not fall us in the hour of need; if he does, God pity the spy and us."

"Pardon me, señor, small need to worry now; it all hangs by a thread anyway, even the rebellion. The death of Martí weakened our end somewhat, but the dreaded fever combined with the patriots should yet more than match the home tyrant."

"If one of us should fall tonight, Pedro, and be left behind with a piece of lead in his heart, remember the duty of a comrade and friend and send the tidings to the fallen one's home."  
"Condannaciò! Señor, do not talk so despondently, for God's sake. It is growing dark and the chills creep up my back like slimy reptiles. If any one dies tonight, it will be me, mark it, Valentino."

"Ugh!" shuddered the other. "We are both growing superstitious."  
"Aye, superstitious, but not cowardly. Never, as far back as the Céspedes can trace their pedigree, has there been found a coward, and now—"

"Hist, Pedro!"

Valentino had suddenly thrown himself upon one knee and raised his head as a sign of warning. He listened attentively for full a minute, then cautiously approached his companion.

"A sentinel," he explained in a whisper. "I have a plan; to overpower this guard and force him to betray the position of the confined spy."

"Good, here are the chips—once, twice, ah, three times I go."

Pedro crept away and disappeared in the gloom.  
With taxed nerves the waiting Valentino crouched upon the earth with his stiletto barred, ready at the least

call to lend his comrade assistance. Slowly, almost with the tardiness of hours, the minutes passed by.

"It is accomplished," Valentino muttered, as a low whistle was borne to his ears.

Stretching his limbs to give them their former strength and suppleness, the insurgent hurried off in the direction of the sound. He had not advanced far before he discovered Pedro bending over the prostrate form of the sentinel.

"Have you killed him, señor?" he asked.

"No, the fellow is only scared and has already given us the desired information. The one we are in search of is confined in a tent just outside the general's headquarters up on the hill yonder where you see the three red lights; help me bind and gag him, señor."

It took but a moment to make the prisoner secure, and the two were on their way again. The general's tent was less than a quarter of a mile distant, but the greatest precaution was necessary in dodging the sentinels.

"There, at last I believe we are safely inside the lines, señor."

"Not yet, Pedro."

"Arto!" (halt) cried a low firm voice of command.

Both came to a dead stop, but the quick witted Valentino was equal to the emergency. The carabiniero who had so suddenly changed the tide of events stood with his gun at his shoulder a dozen feet to the right.

"We are friends, señor."  
"Give the countersign."

"That we cannot do; but we must see the general tonight, as we have important information. Here is a permit that has passed us thus far—see for yourself, that it is not a fraud," and the Cuban held out the letter.

Taken off his guard by the apparent frankness of the man before him, the unsuspecting carabiniero allowed the but of his rifle to fall to the ground, and stretched forth his hand for the paper.

There was a bright flash of steel as it passed through the air.

"The night has its victim," muttered Valentino as he wiped off and sheathed his blade. "Tis some poor mother's son, hardly beyond the limits of boyhood yet, and still it had to be done."

"And a masterly stroke that did it—right to the heart, señor, without a doubt."

"Come."

The captain could say no more; tears were in his eyes and he wished that the hellish work was undone. He could hardly suppress a sob as he thought of the aged mother on the other side of the sea, waiting and praying for a son that would never return. Oh, the anguish of that moment!

Suddenly he halted, for ahead of him, not a dozen rods, was the tent for which he was searching. Pedro remained a few steps behind to guard against surprise, and alone the brave rebel captain crept up to the canvas flap.

There was a light inside; he peered in—there upon a bundle of blankets, with hands and feet securely bound lay—not a man, but the form of a beautiful girl.

For a moment he could hardly believe his eyes. Was she the spy?

"Ah!"

Like a flash of lightning the truth dawned over him; he had solved the mystery.

"Senorita?" he called softly.

"There was a stir among the blankets, and a pale sweet face, with soft black curls clinging about it like a veil, was raised from its hard pillow.

"A friend to aid you; one who has your welfare at heart."

The girl raised herself still higher, but not a sound escaped her lips. It was not necessary, the soft eyes alone told the story.

Swiftly Valentino crossed to the pallet—swiftly he severed the cords that bound her tender limbs—and swiftly he caught her lovely form in his arms and dashed into the open air.

It was all over in a minute, for the Cuban had thrown caution to the winds; his only thought—his only purpose was to convey his precious charge to a place of safety. Alas! that his haste was to prove so fatal.

"Arto! Who goes there?"

The sharp rattle of a carbine rang out on the still night air, and the camp was awake.

"Courage, señorita, we will pass them yet, Pedro. Ho, Pedro!"

"Here, señor. Hasten, the horses are in the hollow just beyond the hill."

It was a race for life, and the patriots won. Hardly were they mounted and off before a dozen or more carabinieros rushed into the hollow.

"Caballo! Caballo!" they cried and discharged their weapons.

"Can you hold your seat, señorita?" the captain asked as he rode up beside her.

"With ease," she answered bravely, smiling bravely through the gloom.

the hills. The wounded horse was fast losing strength, but still the noble animal plunged on till its heart burst; and with an agonizing groan it stumbled and fell dead.

In a moment Valentino had the girl on his own mount, and was dashing away in pursuit of Pedro.

"Courage, señorita," he murmured softly, and pressed her closer to his breast, nestling her face among her beautiful waving curls.

P-i-n-g-gs!  
That fatal bullet zipped close to the captain's head, and was instantly followed by a heavy fall.

"Great God, in Heaven, comarada, are you hurt?"

No answer.  
"Dead!"

That one solemn word was uttered with a pathos that boded ill for the perpetrators of the deed.

"Oh, ye trampers of human rights, may your bone decay in every hidden swamp and recess of Cuba, and may the power of despotic Spain sink beneath the billows of the sea, carrying with it every vestige of the accursed nation. Dios, Oh, Pedro, my comrade—my friend."

The carabinieros were clogg upon the fugitives now, and with a last look at his beloved comrade the captain struck his spurs deep in his horse's flank and sped eastward.

"Courage, señorita, courage," he whispered over and over again. "Yet there remains one other final resort if all others fail. I will save you—have you faith in me?"

And in answer the girl would lift her face and say—  
"Faith unbounded. You are a Cuban patriot."

Never before had the young Cuban been placed in such a critical position. If it had not been for his beautiful charge, he would have turned back and died bravely, fighting over the body of his slain comrade. But this girl with the lovely waving hair and the glorious eyes, had cast a spell over him which was not easily thrown off; she was more than life to him now.

"Oh, my God, they are gaining on us, señor! See! They level their pieces—they fire!"

"Inferno! The horse is struck—he is down! Cling to me, señorita."

The quarry was run to earth; Valentino's last resolve was shattered; he could not now forfeit his own life for that of his companion. But blood should flow as free as water in that dark, gloomy pass before he would allow himself to be taken captive.

What was that?  
A terrific explosion, a stream of quivering flame shooting out from that impenetrable mass of darkness, and the foremost dragoon tumbles from his horse, as lifeless as the weather-beaten rocks about him.

Cr-r-a-ack!  
"Viva Cuba Libre!"

And they are saved.

The next day the insurgent band carried the general's daughter and her brave rescuer in triumph back to the rebel camp; and with his darling—the doomed spy clasped close to his breast, the old man implored God to pour forth the blessings of heaven upon the heads of the two heroes both living and dead.

And Valentino, at the head of his macheteers, led them on to victory and freedom, while in a peaceful villa back in the hills a beautiful girl, a spy, waited and watched for him, her loved one to return.—Waverly Magazine.

### QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

A fly will survive long immersion in water and will sustain the odors of sulphur and other disinfectants without apparent injury. Only turpentine, chloroform and ammonia can get the better of a fly.

The uniform of the postman of Norway is dark green in color, though it is said many of the men want it changed to blue. The facings of the coat are of silver braid, and there is a small cockade of the Norwegian colors on the band round the cap.

Some months before the outbreak of the war in South Africa a consignment of twenty thousand tumblers was sent to Cape Town. They were engraved with the motto of the South African Republic, and meant for drinking the health of the burghers in when they took Cape Town.

A Russian nobleman of immense wealth has hit upon a curious method of ceiling decoration. Every ceiling in his mansion contains a fresco dealing with an episode in the career of his ancestors, and the whole forms what is, perhaps, a unique example of inner-roof ornamentation. Nearly \$400,000 has been expended upon this extraordinary work.

The soldier in the German army is now taught how to put together a novel form of military boat. The materials consist simply of sixteen lances in ordinary use and an outer cover of strong sail cloth supplied with loops, through which the weapons are placed. A handful of soldiers cannot only put it together in a very few minutes, but are able to pull it to pieces at a moment's notice.

Reproductions of the ancient "Coronation Spoon" in the regalia of England are being sold in London. Its exact age is not known, but it antedates the reign of Charles II. The handle, which was originally decorated with enamel that has been worn away, has four pearls set in the broadest part. The spoon is about seven inches long and is used to receive the anointing oil when it is received from the ampulla.

## GOD'S MESSAGE TO MAN

### PREGNANT THOUGHTS FROM THE WORLD'S GREATEST PROPHETS.

Poem: He Understands—A True Christian Should Exercise Self-Control Until He Has Gained a Mastery—One is Hindered by Brooding Over His Discomfort.

Our censurers guard us roundabout,  
And hedge us with their dusty threads;  
They cry us wrong in hope or doubt,  
And howl like ban dogs at our deeds.  
They wail our knotted skein of life,  
And flout us for our clumsy hands,  
Because with tangles it is rife—  
But all the time God understands.

Our censurers measure step and stride  
With mathematic rod and rule,  
And when we wander to one side,  
Straightway they cry aloud, "Thou fool!"  
And book and bell and candle bring  
To curse the one who wanders wild.  
But, ah! the footsteps wandering—  
He understands—He understands.

Our censurers weigh our every word,  
And sift its sound for sign of sin,  
And whisper dreary that are unheard  
Against the screen of fate's gray pin.  
With harpy smile they search our brain  
To bind our thoughts with broken bands,  
But hope shall struggle not in vain,  
And all the time God understands.

He understands our little fears,  
Our little doubts and little woes;  
And in the shadow of the years  
He sees the soul. He knows—He knows;  
He scans us, not as censurers do—  
To mark the blindly searching view—  
But all our good He brings to view.  
He understands—He understands.  
—Josh Wink, in the Baltimore American.

### Self-Poise.

It is possible to conduct oneself in Christian fashion in the midst of aggravating and unnecessary annoyances. If one may not run away or extricate himself from his trying connections, he must surely endeavor, for his own peace of mind, and for example's sake, to exercise self-control till he shall gain a certain mastery. Dishonesty, inefficiency, profanity, ugliness of temper, rudeness and discourtesy in others are object lessons with no uncertain emphasis as to one's duty to avoid similar confusion in conduct and speech. While they are discouraging and irritating, it is good to reflect that one's behavior is hindered by brooding over his discomfort, if he is powerless to remedy matters. His own best attention to the work that falls to him will yield a glad satisfaction, and his practice of blindness and deafness will help toward patience and forbearance. Wrongdoing is always wrong, and injures many besides the wrong-doer. One may believe this thoroughly, even while he exerts himself to self-control that he may not be oppressed and borne down. If one may not be happily placed, even though his duty holds him, one's better nature is severely tried, but a determined direction of one's thought from the fiction of what is unlovely and untrue will help to a serenity that is quite necessary if one would suppress his impulse to frequent and harsh condemnation, and hold himself in check because of the Christian ideal he is striving to reach. Prayer, patience, persistence are helps to this end.—Universalist Leader.

### God's Mercy.

Let us learn that there are times in our brief lives when, like our great high priest, we are sore amazed and very heavy by reason of strange and startling changes in our circumstances. Sometimes unexpected agonies come into our own hearts when, though our work appears to be acceptable and successful, the worker is ignored and forgotten. This is what tests us. Not so much the wilderness solitude, or the greater power of another, or the specially successful work of another, but rather dismal firm service just where we feel most equal to the work, to be limited in opportunity, to feel a seeming neglect and realize an apparent defeat. Then it is that we need supremely to know Him with whom we have to do. To know that He delighted in mercy, and that it is His good pleasure to give us a kingdom, and to touch circumstances would seem to indicate that we are forgotten, or that our case is unimportant, to be assured within ourselves of His love, His mercy and His care.—Rev. E. Duckworth.

### The Spiritual Kept to the Front.

"The theory that men may be won to the spiritual life by ministering to their physical necessities, or by providing for them amusements and social opportunities, is not to be entirely discarded," says the Watchman (Baptist) of Boston. "But today, as in the times of our Lord, the eyes that are largely fastened upon 'the leaves and fishes' are not apt to discern the heavenly vision. The chief spiritual value of this ministry is that it serves as a model for manifesting human sympathy and for interpreting the divine love. Sometimes, as in the case of the desperately miserable, it is the only avenue through which they can be reached. The vast majority of people, however, can be most directly and effectively reached by the clear and loving presentation of the gospel. No man ever had a harder field that Dr. Edward Judson in New York City. But the distinguishing feature and the secret of his success, is that he has always kept the spiritual aspects of his work primary."

### Our Companions.

Every man is born into a vast workshop full of materials and tools. His business in life is to select the material upon which and the tools with which he shall work, and then, out of his own imagination, he fashions his world, and, as the product of what he thinks and does and feels, that world passes out of the realm of imagination into reality and becomes his world. So every man creates his companionship according to his thought. If his thought is fine and generous and high, he is the best company and the most inspiring; if it is mean and low and vile, no matter what title and ignoble allowance, it is a matter of character. Companionship does not depend upon accident, but upon selection. Every man makes his own friends, and it is this fact which gives the profounder truth to the old proverb, "A man is known by the company he keeps."—Outlook.

### Obedient to God.

Oh, that we could take that simple view of things and to feel that the one thing which lies before us is to please God! What gain is it to please the world, to please the great, nay, even to please those whom we love, compared with this? What gain is it to be applauded, admired, courted, followed—compared with this one aim of not being disobedient to the heavenly vision?—J. H. Newman.

### Factors of a Christian Life.

It ought not to surprise us that pride is perhaps the greatest sin and weakness of our Christian life to-day. I know we are told that even business makes its possessors proud. Well, the holiness that makes a man proud is the holiness of the devil, and not the holiness of God the Holy Ghost. No man is entirely sanctified in whom there is the slightest welcome or the slightest place given to the smallest measure of pride. It is no wonder, therefore, that when Augustine was asked what were the three most important things in the Christian life, he said: "The first is humility; the second is humility; the third is humility!"—The Rev. Charles Inwood.